



No.158 Rs. 10

ANGULIMALA

— THE ROBBER WHO BECAME A SAINT
The Phantom Head Original



Having realised the cause of human suffering and the remedy thereof, Lord Buddha wandered from place to place to enlighten the people. His teachings concerned the forces that cause bondage and the means by which salvation can be achieved. He was received with respect wherever he went.

Prasenajit, the King of Kosala, who ruled from his capital, Shravasti, was a great admirer of Lord Buddha, although he was not converted to Buddhism.

In the forest on the outskirts of Shravasti, lived Angulimāla, the dreaded highway robber who plundered and killed travelling traders. Fearing him, people eventually gave up travelling by the road that passed through his haunts. Though everybody shunned Angulimāla, Buddha chose to cross his path. Then took place the historic meeting of the saint and the sinner. In that encounter between the forces of non-violence and violence, the former prevailed. Angulimāla became a disciple of Lord Buddha.

This Amar Chitra Katha is an adaptation of the story of Angulimāla from the Buddhist text, *PARAMATTHADI-PANI* of Dhammapala.

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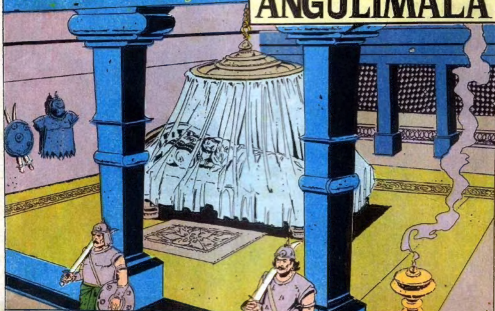
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LONG, LONG AGO, A KING CALLED PRASENAJIT RULED OVER KOSALA* FROM HIS CAPITAL, SHRAVASTI. ONE NIGHT WHEN HE WAS FAST ASLEEP...

...THE ROOM WAS SUDDENLY LIT BY FLASHES OF LIGHT. HE WOKE UP WITH A START.

WHO-WHAT'S THAT? THE WEAPONS! WHAT'S HAPPENING TO THEM? WHY DO THEY GLITTER SO?



THE NEXT MOMENT HOWEVER ALL WAS DARK AGAIN.

WAS IT A NIGHTMARE?
WAS MY IMAGINATION
PLAYING TRICKS ON ME?
OR WAS I REALLY DAZZLED
BY THE LIGHT FROM
THE WEAPONS?

THE NEXT MORNING, ANY
DOUBTS HE MIGHT HAVE
HAD, VANISHED.

AT MIDNIGHT, THE WEAPONS
IN THE ARMOURY AND IN
EVERY HOUSE
OF KOSALA, BLAZED, FOR
A MOMENT, WITH A
BRILLIANT LIGHT.

A STRANGE THING
HAPPENED LAST NIGHT,
YOUR MAJESTY!

AT THAT MOMENT, IN THE HOUSE OF THE
ROYAL PRIEST, GARGA —

HOW HANDSOME
IS OUR
NEW-BORN SON!

HE IS, NO DOUBT. BUT I AM
WORRIED. IMMEDIATELY
AFTER HIS BIRTH, STRANGE
LIGHTS ISSUED FORTH
FROM THE WEAPONS OF
THE NIGHT-GUARDS.

WHEN THE PERTURBED GARGA CONSULTED A
LEARNED ASTROLOGER —

I REGRET TO TELL
YOU THAT YOUR SON
IS GOING TO BE A
ROBBER — A MENACE
TO OUR PEOPLE.

GARGA WENT TO THE PALACE AND
TOLD THE KING THE STORY.

AH! THAT EXPLAINS
WHY THE WEAPONS
SHONE SO BRIGHTLY
LAST NIGHT!

YOUR MAJESTY,
I CANNOT REAR
A SON WHO IS
DESTINED TO BE
A MENACE TO
THE KINGDOM.

THE SCRIPTURES SAY
THAT ONE LIFE MAY BE
SACRIFICED TO SAVE A
HUNDRED. THEREFORE
PERMIT ME TO PUT
HIM TO DEATH.

NO! I WON'T
ALLOW THE
KILLING OF
AN INNOCENT
BABY!

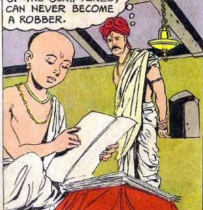
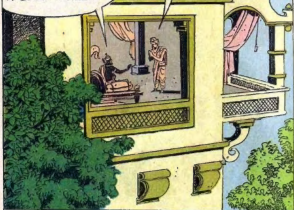
LORD BUDDHA HAS
TAUGHT ME TO BE-
LIEVE IN THE INNATE
GOODNESS OF EVERY
LIVING CREATURE.

LET YOUR SON HAVE A SOUND EDUCATION. UNDER YOUR GUIDANCE, I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT HE WILL GROW UP TO BE A GOOD CITIZEN.

THANK YOU, YOUR MAJESTY. I WILL TRY MY BEST TO INSTIL VIRTUE IN HIM.

THE INFANT WHO WAS NAMED AHIMSAKA, GREW UP TO BE AN INTELLIGENT BOY.

ONE AS DEDICATED AS HE IS TO THE STUDY OF THE SCRIPTURES, CAN NEVER BECOME A ROBBER.



THEN, WHEN AHIMSAKA WAS ABOUT FOURTEEN YEARS OLD—

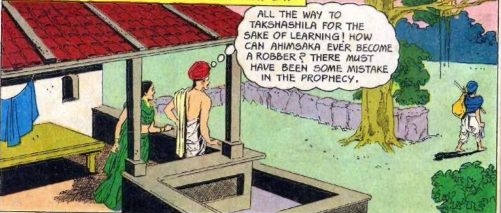
FATHER, PLEASE PERMIT ME TO GO TO TAKSHASHILA.

YOU MAY GO, MY SON. YOU HAVE MY BLESSINGS.



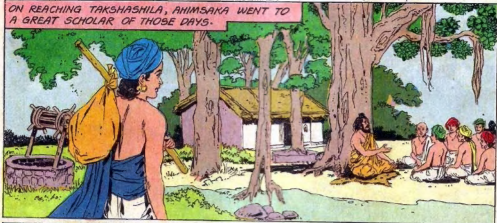
AHIMSAKA LEFT FOR TAKSHASHILA THAT VERY DAY.

ALL THE WAY TO TAKSHASHILA FOR THE SAKE OF LEARNING! HOW CAN AHIMSAKA EVER BECOME A ROBBER? THERE MUST HAVE BEEN SOME MISTAKE IN THE PROPHECY.



* A RENOWNED CENTRE OF LEARNING

ON REACHING TAKSHASHILA, AHIMSAKA WENT TO A GREAT SCHOLAR OF THOSE DAYS.



AHIMSAKA SOON WON THE HEART OF THE MASTER.

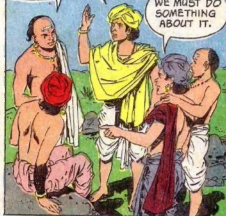


SUCH COMMENTS AROUSED THE JEALOUSY OF THE OTHER DISCIPLES.

AHIMSAKA THINKS TOO MUCH OF HIMSELF.

OUR TEACHER'S PRAISE HAS GONE TO HIS HEAD.

WE MUST DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT.



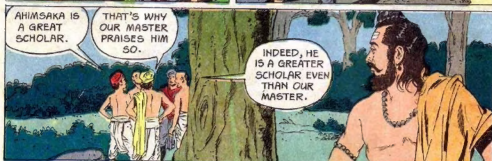
THEY HATCHED A PLOT TO ESTRANGE THE MASTER FROM HIS FAVOURITE DISCIPLE.

QUICK ! THE MASTER IS APPROACHING. LET US BEGIN OUR LITTLE DRAMA.



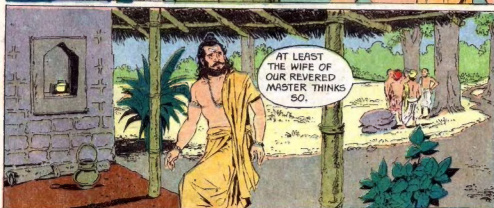
AHIMSAKA IS A GREAT SCHOLAR.

THAT'S WHY OUR MASTER PRAISES HIM SO.



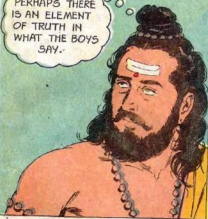
INDEED, HE IS A GREATER SCHOLAR EVEN THAN OUR MASTER.

AT LEAST THE WIFE OF OUR REVERED MASTER THINKS SO.

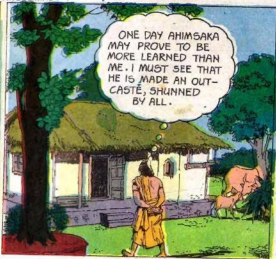


THE MASTER BECAME THOUGHTFUL.

PERHAPS THERE
IS AN ELEMENT
OF TRUTH IN
WHAT THE BOYS
SAY.

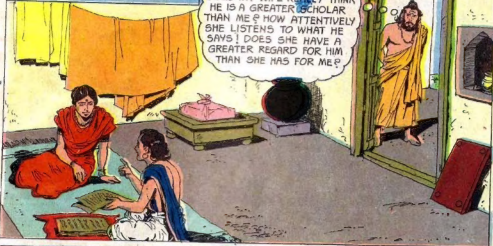


ONE DAY AHIMSAKA
MAY PROVE TO BE
MORE LEARNED THAN
ME. I MUST SEE THAT
HE IS MADE AN OUT-
CASTE, SHUNNED
BY ALL.



WHEN HE ENTERED THE HOUSE —

DOES MY WIFE REALLY
THINK HE IS A GREATER SCHOLAR
THAN ME? HOW ATTENTIVELY
SHE LISTENS TO WHAT HE
SAYS! DOES SHE HAVE A
GREATER REGARD FOR HIM
THAN SHE HAS FOR ME?



WHATEVER THE
TRUTH MAY BE,
AHIMSAKA WILL
HAVE TO GO.



HE ENTERED THE HALL STEALTHILY SO THAT HIS WIFE AND AHIMSAKA, DEEPLY ENGROSSED IN THEIR DISCUSSIONS, WOULD NOT NOTICE HIS PRESENCE.

AHIMSAKA!
GET UP!

I HAVE BEEN STANDING HERE ALL THIS WHILE. HAVE YOU BECOME SO ARROGANT THAT YOU FORGET TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE PRESENCE OF YOUR GURU *?

PARDON ME, MASTER. I...

THE MASTER, HOWEVER, DIDN'T GIVE HIM A CHANCE TO CONTINUE.

HUMILITY SHOULD BE THE OUTCOME OF KNOWLEDGE, NOT ARROGANCE. YOU HAVE NO PLACE HERE. YOU MAY GO.

AS A BEMUSED AHIMSAKA WALKED AWAY FROM THE MASTER'S HOUSE, THE OTHER DISCIPLES GLOATED OVER THE SUCCESS OF THEIR PLOT.


IT WORKED!

I WAS CERTAIN IT WOULD.

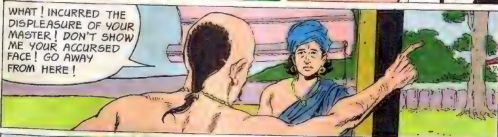
WHEN AHIMSAKA RETURNED TO SHRAVASTI —



WHY ARE
YOU BACK SO
SOON & HAVE
YOU FINISHED
YOUR STUDIES?



NO, FATHER. I WAS
SENT AWAY. I INCUR-
RED THE DISPLEASURE
OF MY MASTER.
BUT I...



WHAT! INCURRED THE
DISPLEASURE OF YOUR
MASTER! DON'T SHOW
ME YOUR ACCURSED
FACE! GO AWAY
FROM HERE!



WHAT HAVE
I DONE TO
DESERVE SUCH
A FATE & WHAT
SHALL I DO?

BUT AHIMSAKA'S EFFORTS TO FIND SOME WORK PROVED FUTILE.

I WILL TRY TO MAKE A LIVING WITH WHAT LITTLE KNOWLEDGE I HAVE.



EMPLOY A YOUTH WHO HAS INCURRED THE DISPLEASURE OF HIS MASTER? NEVER!



HE WAS SHUNNED BY ALL.

AHIMSAKA IS COMING THIS WAY.

CLOSE THE DOOR!! DON'T WANT HIM TO ENTER OUR HOUSE AND POLLUTE IT.





DEEP IN THOUGHT, AHIMSAKA LEFT KOSALA.



SUDDENLY —

SURRENDER
WHATEVER YOU
HAVE IF YOU
VALUE YOUR
LIFE.



NO! NO!
NO!



TAKE THIS! AND THIS!
THERE! I AM GIVING
YOU ALL THAT
I HAVE!



DISGUSTED, AHIMSAKA LET HIM GO.

HE HAS SHOWN ME THE WAY. I WILL BE A HIGHWAY ROBBER. I'LL BE MAKING A LIVING WHILE I TAKE REVENGE ON THE SOCIETY THAT REJECTED ME.

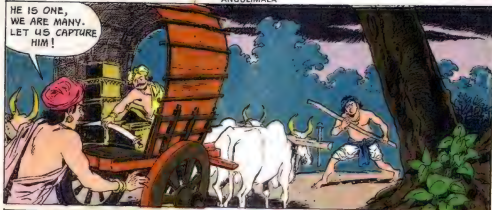
MERCY! PLEASE HAVE MERCY ON ME.

LATER, IN THE EVENING, A FLEET OF BULLOCK CARTS CARRYING MERCHANDISE PASSED THAT WAY ON THEIR WAY TO KAUSHAMBI.

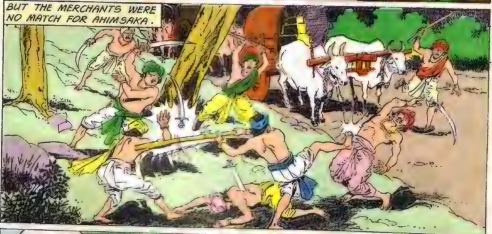
HALT!

MY GOD! A ROBBER!

HE IS ONE,
WE ARE MANY.
LET US CAPTURE
HIM!



BUT THE MERCHANTS WERE
NO MATCH FOR AHIMSAKA.



ALL DEAD!
GOOD!



I WILL KEEP THEIR
ANGULIS* AND MAKE
A GARLAND OF
THEM.



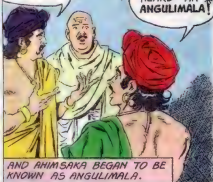
SOON, AHMSAKA'S ATROCIOUS DEEDS BECAME THE TALK OF KOSALA.



NO ONE KNOWS WHO HE IS NOR WHERE HE COMES FROM.

HE WEARS A STRANGE GARLAND...

SO I'VE HEARD - AN ANGULIMALA!

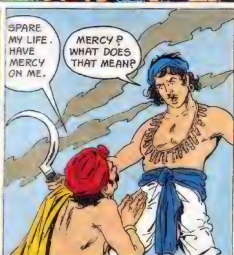
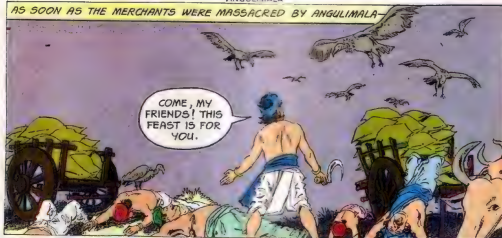


AND AHMSAKA BEGAN TO BE KNOWN AS ANGULIMALA.

THE TRADERS WHO HAD TO TRAVEL, CARRYING MERCHANDISE, WERE THE WORST HIT BY ANGULIMALA, AS THE SHORTEST ROUTE TO KAUSHAMBI WAS THROUGH ANGULIMALA'S HAUNTS.



AS SOON AS THE MERCHANTS WERE MASSACRED BY ANGULIMALA—



AT LAST THE TERROR-STRICKEN
SUBJECTS TURNED TO PRASENAUT.

YOUR MAJESTY,
DELIVER US
FROM ANGULI-
MALA.

I WILL COMMAND
MY FOREST GUARDS
TO CAPTURE THE
NOTORIOUS
MURDERER.



AS THE FOREST GUARDS ENTERED
ANGULIMALA'S HAUNT —

A WHOLE ARMY OF
THEM! GOOD! THAT
MANY MORE FINGERS
FOR MY GARLAND!



LIFTING UP HUGE BOULDERS, ANGULIMALA
HURLED THEM AT THE GUARDS...



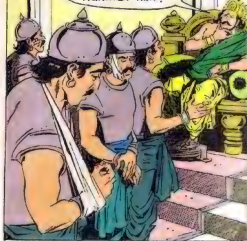
... AND THEN SPRANG UPON THEM.

A FEW, HOWEVER, WERE ABLE TO
ESCAPE WITH THEIR LIVES.



WHEN THEY REPORTED TO
PRASENAJIT —

JUST ONE MAN, AND
YOU WERE HELPLESS
AGAINST HIM!



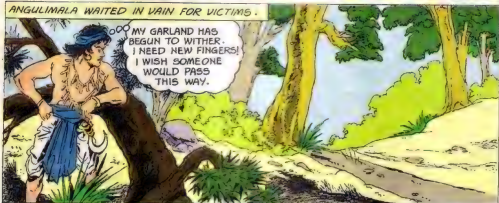
THAT EVENING, THE ROYAL DRUMMER WENT
ROUND THE CITY.

GIVE EAR!
GIVE EAR! PEOPLE
ARE ADVISED TO
AVOID ANGULIMALA.
THOSE GOING TO
KAUSHAMBI SHOULD
TAKE THE ROUTE
VIA MAGADHA...



ANGULIMALA WAITED IN VAIN FOR VICTIMS.

MY GARLAND HAS
BEGUN TO WITHER.
I NEED NEW FINGERS!
I WISH SOMEONE
WOULD PASS
THIS WAY.



SUDDENLY HE SPOTTED A MONK WALKING BY.

MY PRAYER
HAS BEEN
HEARD!

HALT!



ANGULIMALA RAN AFTER THE MONK.



TO HIS ASTONISHMENT, HOWEVER, THE MONK, WHO SEEMED TO BE WALKING AT A LEISURELY PACE, WAS ALWAYS A STEP AHEAD.

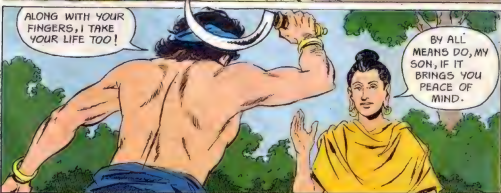


AT LAST EXHAUSTED BY THE CHASE, ANGULIMALA PAUSED.



O MONK,
STOP! STOP
MOVING.

I AM NOT MOVING.
I AM AT REST. IT
IS YOU WHO ARE
IN PERPETUAL
MOTION.



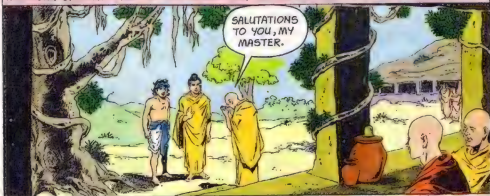
ANGULIMALA COLLAPSED AT THE FEET OF THE MONK.



MASTER, HENCEFORTH I WILL NEVER KILL.



THE MONK BROUGHT HIM TO THE MONASTERY ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF SHRAVASTI.



ANATHAPINDIKA, I HAVE BROUGHT YET ANOTHER BROTHER—ANGULIMALA.



THE LOVING MONK WAS NONE OTHER THAN LORD BUDDHA.

THE NEXT MORNING, PRASENAJIT VISITED THE MONASTERY. THE KING HAD COME TO PAY HIS RESPECTS TO THE MASTER.

IT LOOKS AS THOUGH YOU HAVE STARTED ON AN EXPEDITION.

YES, MASTER. I WANT TO EXTERMINATE THAT MONSTER - ANGULIMALA. I HAVE COME FOR YOUR BLESSINGS.



SUPPOSING ANGULIMALA GIVES UP THE PATH OF VIOLENCE AND BEGINS TO LIVE THE LIFE OF AN ASCETIC, WHAT WILL YOUR REACTION BE?

I WILL SALUTE HIM THEN, MY LORD. BUT PARDON ME, I CAN'T IMAGINE ANGULIMALA AS AN ASCETIC.

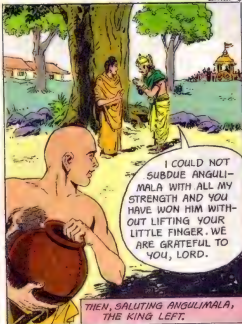


BUT HE HAS BECOME ONE. THERE HE IS, WATERING THE PLANTS.

WHAT!

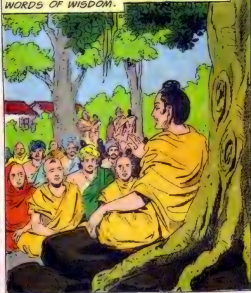


ANGULIMALA BECAME DEVOTED TO BUDDHA. HE LISTENED TO THE MASTER'S WORDS OF WISDOM.



I COULD NOT SUBDUCE ANGULIMALA WITH ALL MY STRENGTH AND YOU HAVE WON HIM WITHOUT LIFTING YOUR LITTLE FINGER. WE ARE GRATEFUL TO YOU, LORD.

THEN, SALUTING ANGULIMALA, THE KING LEFT.



HE NURSED THE SICK.

I AM FEELING BETTER NOW, ANGULIMALA. YOU MAY REST.

DON'T MIND ME, BROTHER. YOU SLEEP.



ONE DAY WHEN ANGULIMALA WENT TO BEG FOR HIS FOOD.

DO YOU WANT MORE RICE ?

YOU ARE GENEROUS, MY CHILD. MAY YOU, YOUR MOTHER AND FATHER BE BLESSED.



I HAVE NO FATHER. HE IS DEAD. HE WAS KILLED BY THE WICKED ANGULIMALA.

OH!



SICK AT HEART, ANGULIMALA WALKED BACK TO THE MONASTERY...



...WHERE HE SPENT MANY A SLEEPLESS NIGHT.

I AM AN ORPHAN. YOU MADE ME ONE!

MURDERER!

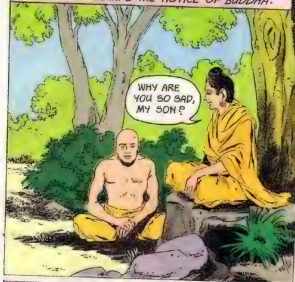
YOU KILLED MY FATHER.

OH! NO, NO!

YES, YOU ARE A MURDERER!



THAT ANGULIMALA HAD SUDDENLY BECOME DESPONDENT DID NOT ESCAPE THE NOTICE OF BUDDHA.



WHY ARE YOU SO SAD, MY SON?

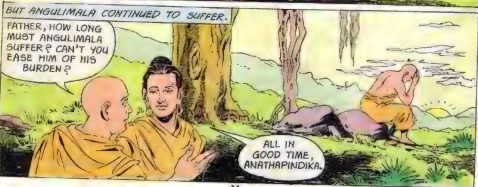


MASTER, THESE HANDS OF MINE ARE STAINED WITH BLOOD. I AM A SINNER WITHOUT A FUTURE, WITHOUT HOPE!



WHY CHILD, REPENTANCE IS THE ONLY FIRE THAT IS CAPABLE OF BURNING SINS ALREADY COMMITTED. YOU ARE ON THE RIGHT PATH.

BLESS ME, MASTER. YOUR PRESENCE AND YOUR WORDS ARE SOOTHING.

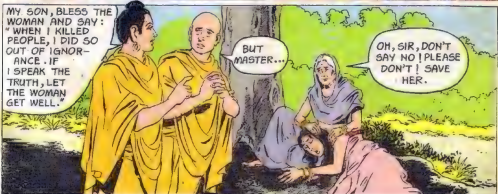
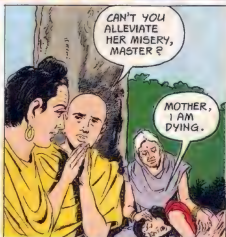
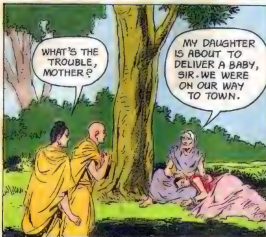
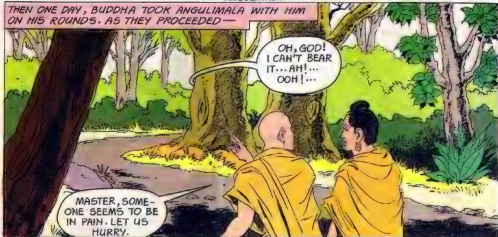


BUT ANGULIMALA CONTINUED TO SUFFER.

FATHER, HOW LONG MUST ANGULIMALA SUFFER? CAN'T YOU EASE HIM OF HIS BURDEN?

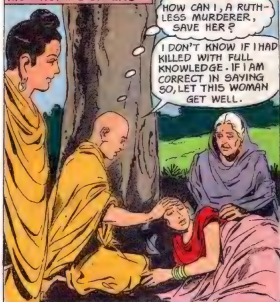
ALL IN GOOD TIME, ANATHAPINDIKA.

THEN ONE DAY, BUDDHA TOOK ANGULIMALA WITH HIM ON HIS ROUNDS. AS THEY PROCEEDED —



WITH MUCH RELUCTANCE, ANGULIMALA OBEYED HIS MASTER'S ORDERS.

AND THE TWO RESUMED THEIR JOURNEY. SUDDENLY —



HOW CAN I, A RUTHLESS MURDERER, SAVE HER?

I DON'T KNOW IF I HAD KILLED WITH FULL KNOWLEDGE. IF I AM CORRECT IN SAYING SO, LET THIS WOMAN GET WELL.



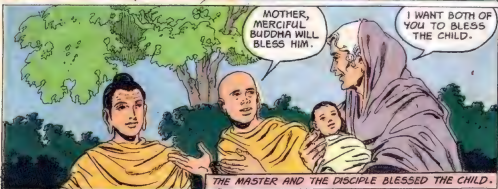
OH, SIR, PLEASE WAIT.

IT'S THE OLD WOMAN. HER DAUGHTER MUST BE DYING.

THE OLD WOMAN APPEARED, BRINGING NEWS NOT OF DEATH, BUT OF LIFE.



SIR, YOU BLESSED MY DAUGHTER AND SAVED HER LIFE. BLESS HER LITTLE SON, TOO.



MOTHER, MERCIFUL BUDDHA WILL BLESS HIM.

I WANT BOTH OF YOU TO BLESS THE CHILD.

THE MASTER AND THE DISCIPLE BLESSED THE CHILD.

WHEN THE OLD WOMAN WENT AWAY—

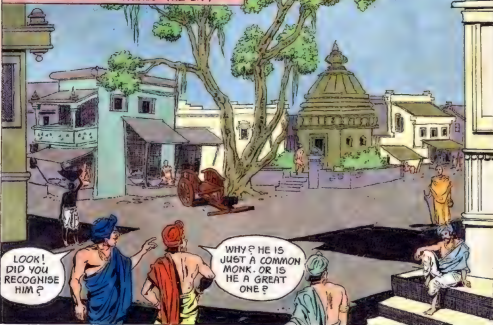
ANGULIMALA, AT LEAST NOW ARE YOU CONVINCED THAT YOU HAVE OVERCOME YOUR PAST DEEDS?

I AM, MASTER, THANKS TO YOU.

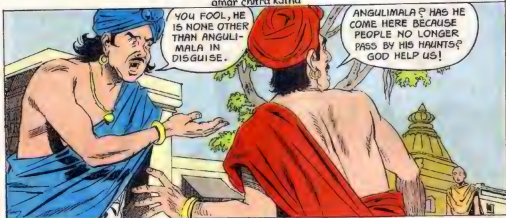
SON, YOU NO LONGER NEED ME. YOU MUST WALK ALONE IN THE WORLD.

IF YOU INSIST, I WILL. BUT IT IS YOU WHO HAVE GIVEN ME THE STRENGTH TO DO SO. BUDDHAM SHARANAM GACCHAMI.*

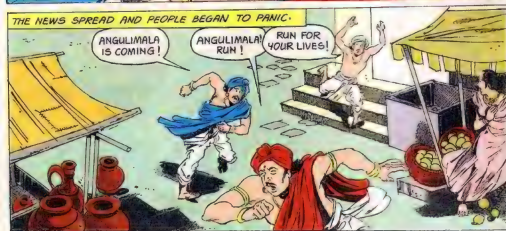
AFTER PARTING FROM BUDDHA, ANGULIMALA DECIDED TO GO TO SHRAVASTI. AS HE ENTERED THE CITY —



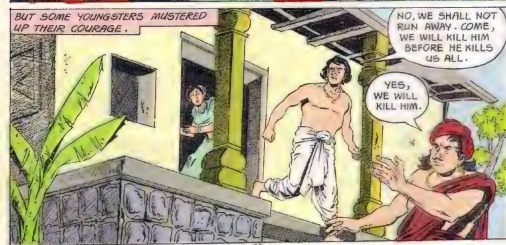
* I TAKE REFUGE IN BUDDHA



THE NEWS SPREAD AND PEOPLE BEGAN TO PANIC.



BUT SOME YOUNGSTERS MUSTERED UP THEIR COURAGE.



ARMING THEMSELVES, A FURIOUS MOB
APPROACHED ANGULIMALA.

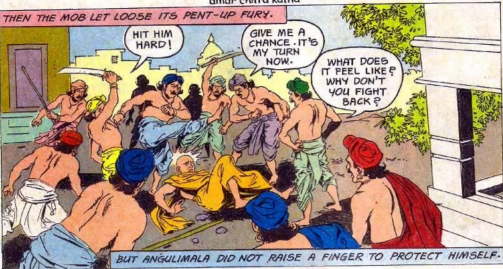


AS SOON AS ANGULIMALA STEPPED
OUT OF THE HOUSE, A STONE HIT
HIM ON THE FOREHEAD.



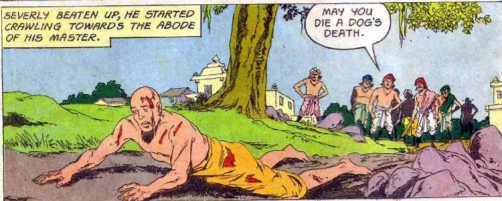
IT WAS FOLLOWED BY MANY MORE.

THEN THE MOB LET LOOSE ITS PENT-UP FURY.



BUT ANGULIMALA DID NOT RAISE A FINGER TO PROTECT HIMSELF.

SEVERELY BEATEN UP, HE STARTED CRAWLING TOWARDS THE ABODE OF HIS MASTER.



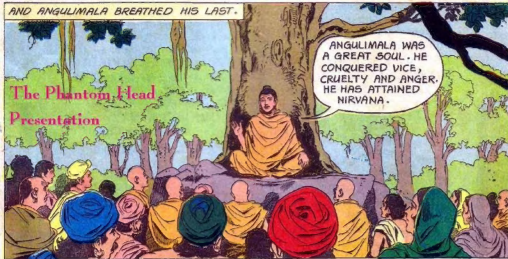
WHEN HE REACHED THE MONASTERY—



* I TAKE REFUGE IN BUDDHA



AND ANGULIMALA BREATHED HIS LAST.



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